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Department of State

INCOMING
TELEGRAM

PAGE 01 MONTEV 04306 170427Z
ACTION ARA-15

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MONTEV 04306 170427Z

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 HA-05 MCT-02 ICA-11 CIAE-00 INR-10
NSAE-00 L-03 H-01 SS-15 NSC-05 AID-05 PA-01 IO-14
DODE-00 /088 W

-----031254 170904Z /10

R 151130Z DEC 78
FM AMEMBASSY MONTEVIDEO
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7804
INFO AMEMBASSY BRASILIA
AMCONSUL RIO DE JANEIRO
AMCONSUL SAO PAULO
AMEMBASSY BUENOS AIRES

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~ MONTEVIDEO 4306

BRASILIA PLEASE PASS TO PORTO ALEGRE

E.O. 12065: GDS 12/13/84 (SHAW, DAVID G) OR-P
TAGS: SHUM, BR, UY
SUBJ: KIDNAPPING OF URUGUAYAN REFUGEES IN BRAZIL

REF: A) RIO DE JANEIRO 5315, B) BRASILIA 9490, C) PORTO
ALEGRE 321 (NOTAL)

1. ~~(C)~~ EMBASSY INTERVIEWED MOTHER OF LILIANA CELIBERTI, WHOSE VERSION OF KIDNAP/DISAPPEARANCE COINCIDES CLOSELY WITH PREVIOUS REPORTING. SHE TRAVELED TO PORTO ALEGRE AT THE BEHEST OF JOURNALISTS THERE WHO WERE FOLLOWING UP ON STORY, LIMITING HER CONTACTS TO THEM AND LOCAL ATTORNEY OMAR FERRI. ALTHOUGH LATTER HAS BEEN DESCRIBED IN PRESS AS "HIRED BY FAMILY AND FRIENDS OF THE VICTIMS", MRS. CELIBERTI STATES SHE HAS NOT RETAINED HIS SERVICES AND HAS NO IDEA WHO IS PAYING HIM. HER VERSION OF GRANDSON'S RECOLLECTION OF INCIDENT DIFFERS SOMEWHAT FROM THAT REPORTED TO US BY VEJA REPORTER CUNHA (MVD 4179). SHE TOLD US CHILDREN WERE REUNITED BRIEFLY WITH PARENTS PRIOR TO BEING TAKEN INTO URUGUAY. THIS APPEARS MINOR POINT HOWEVER SINCE BOY CONTINUES TO STATE HE AND SISTER WERE TRANSPORTED TO URUGUAY IN CUSTODY OF SPANISH-SPEAKING CAPTORS.

2. ~~(C)~~ FYI: GOU SECURITY OFFICIAL HAS MEANWHILE CONFIRMED TO EMBASSY PARTICIPATION OF AN ARMY INTELLIGENCE ELEMENT IN THE INCIDENT, ACTING IN COLLABORATION WITH BRAZILIAN COUNTER-PARTS. (ANOTHER SECURITY OFFICIAL STATED THAT THE VICTIMS WOULD NOT BE MISTREATED.) SOURCES INDICATED THAT CELIBERTI AND RODRIGUEZ HAD BEEN IN CONTACT WITH URUGUAYAN DISSIDENTS UNDER SURVEILLANCE HERE AND THAT NATURE AND SCOPE OF THEIR ACTIVITIES WERE FELT TO JUSTIFY ACTION TAKEN REGARDLESS OF INTERNATIONAL REPERCUSSIONS. SOURCE ALSO STATED THAT OPERATION HAD NOT BEEN CLEARED WITHIN GOU BEYOND INTELLIGENCE BUREAUCRACY. END FYI.

3. ~~(C)~~ DESPITE REPORTS (REF B) THAT BRAZILIAN FONMIN-SILVEIRA HAD RAISED CASE DURING RECENT VISIT TO URUGUAY, FONMIN FOLLE MARTINEZ CLAIMS THAT ISSUE DID NOT COME UP. BRITISH AMBASSADOR, WHO IS FOLLOWING CASE CLOSELY, HAS GOTTEN SAME RESPONSE FROM HIS BRAZILIAN COUNTERPART HERE. ITALIANS HAVE ALSO BECOME INCREASINGLY ACTIVE IN VIEW OF CLAIM TO ITALIAN NATIONALITY OF LILIANA CELIBERTI, BIRTH IN ITALY OF HER DAUGHTER FRANCESCA AND CONTINUED RESIDENCE THERE OF HER HUSBAND. (ITALIAN EMBASSY UNDERSTANDS THAT LILIANA HAD ACTUALLY MADE BRIEF VISIT TO URUGUAY SHORTLY BEFORE HER DISAPPEARANCE IN PORTO ALEGRE AND SPECULATES THAT THIS MAY HAVE DRAWN ATTENTION OF GOU SECURITY SERVICES.) SWEDISH AND DUTCH EMBASSY ARE ALSO FOLLOWING CASE IN RESPONSE TO INSTRUCTIONS. ALL CONCERNED REPORT URUGUAYAN FONOFF CONTACTS OBVIOUSLY AND PAINFULLY EMBARRASSED BY AFFAIR AND UNABLE TO PROVIDE FURTHER INFORMATION. WE HAVE REQUEST FOR INFORMATION PENDING FOR ABOUT TWO WEEKS WITH FONOFF HUMAN RIGHTS OFFICER (WHO HAS ALSO BEEN NOTABLY UNAVAILABLE FOR

PAST SEVERAL DAYS).

4. ~~(C)~~ FRENCH LAWYER JEAN LOUIS WEIL, CURRENTLY INVESTIGATING CASE IN PORTO ALEGRE (REF C), IS WELL KNOWN TO EMBASSY THROUGH HIS DECEMBER 1977 VISIT TO MONTEVIDEO AS ONE OF THREE LAWYERS INVESTIGATING HUMAN RIGHTS. GROUP, HEADED BY ROBERT GOLDMAN OF AMERICAN UNIVERSITY, WAS ATTACKED HEAVILY IN LOCAL PRESS AND GOU CONTINUES TO REGARD GOLDMAN VISIT PARTICIPANTS AS PARTICULAR BETE-NOIR. WOULD APPRECIATE ANY INFORMATION REGARDING POSSIBLE VISIT BY WEIL TO URUGUAY.
PEZZULLO

Handwritten:
Brazil
Uruguay
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